



## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION & GOALS**

### **BROADBAND TECHNOLOGY OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM (BTOP)**

The U.S. Department of Commerce awarded the Nebraska Library Commission a **\$2,416,403** grant to fund Nebraska's public computer center project, **Library Broadband Builds Nebraska Communities**. The three-year project, which runs from August 1, 2010 to July 31, 2013, is designed to expand broadband capacity; upgrade public computing resources in libraries; and advance access to employment, learning, health information, and E-Government services. The Department of Commerce National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP), funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), provides funding to expand broadband access and adoption in communities across the U.S. and intends to increase jobs, spur investments in technology and infrastructure, and provide long-term economic benefits. In addition to the federal grant, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is providing **\$1,251,786** in matching funds, including a grant and technical assistance to support the project. The total project budget is **\$3,668,189**.

The **Nebraska Library Commission** is enhancing public computer centers in 147 public library locations statewide. Public libraries qualified for the grant based on income levels, broadband saturation, or minority population levels. The majority of the participating libraries serve communities with a median income below the national average.

The **Library Broadband Builds Nebraska Communities** project also proposes to:

- Upgrade broadband access at 45 public computer centers, deploy more than 600 new workstations and upgrade another 475 at the 147 public library locations, to deliver rich Internet content and provide computer literacy training.
- Enable access for as many as 13,300 weekly users at libraries, and increase the average Internet speeds available at public computer centers.
- Train as many as 42,700 residents with instructor-led training.

### **Project Partners**

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| ▪ Center for Rural Affairs   | ▪ Nebraska Community Foundation                                       |
| ▪ Center for Rural Entrepreneurship                                | ▪ Nebraska Department of Labor  |
| ▪ Central Community College  | ▪ University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension                            |
| ▪ Nebraska Court Administrator's Office                            | ▪ University of Nebraska Medical Center, McGoogan Library of Medicine |
| ▪ National Network of Libraries of Medicine: MidContinental Region |   |

*The 147 participating LBBNC libraries along with the Project Partners will feature events such as Public Computing Center Learning Nights to encourage residents to utilize the enhanced computer and broadband services available at the centers.*

### **"Library Broadband Builds Nebraska Communities" Project Contacts**

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